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SUBJECT: FLORIDA GOVERNOR MEETS VP DURING QUICK VISIT TO ARGENTINA

REF: RIO DE JANEIRO 622

¶1. Florida Governor Charlie Crist made a short visit to Argentina on November 8 during a swing through South America. His delegation included his Chief of Staff, George Lemieux; the Vice Chairman of Enterprise Florida, Tom Kunz (CEO of Suntrust Bank Florida); the CEO of Enterprise Florida, John Anderson; and the Senior Vice President for International of Enterprise Florida, Manny Mencia. Ambassador Wayne accompanied the Governor and his delegation to meet with Argentine Vice President Daniel Scioli, who was recently elected to a four-year term as Governor of the Province of Buenos Aires, arguably Argentina's second most important elected office.

¶2. The meeting with Vice President Scioli was very productive. Vice President Scioli explained that the Province of Buenos Aires has one-third of Argentina's population, and produces over 30 percent of the national GDP. He expressed a strong interest in strengthening economic and business ties between the province and the State of Florida, and specifically inquired about what Florida might be able to share with the province regarding waste treatment and waste-to-energy programs. Governor Crist said that he would be delighted to follow-up and send VP Scioli information and contacts on those issues.

¶3. Governor Crist also invited VP Scioli to visit Florida, and promised to bring a large trade delegation to Argentina in 2008. FCS/Buenos Aires has already scheduled the mission, which will be coordinated jointly by the Embassy and Enterprise Florida, for November 19-22, 2008. Governor Crist pointed out that Argentina was one of his State's top trading partners, and that Florida was the top-ranked U.S. state in terms of trade and commercial relations with Argentina.

WAYNE